

Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (EED)



Assessment and Accountability Test Security Supplement

Updated September 2013

Purpose of the Supplement

Maintaining the security of the Alaska Comprehensive System of Student Assessment is fundamental for ensuring valid test scores and promoting fairness at all levels. A secure and positive testing environment, which provides an experience that gives all students the opportunity to show what they know and are able to do, is essential for valid data to guide instruction and increase student achievement.

EED's Assessment and Accountability unit provides training, support, and resources, such as this supplement, in an effort to assist district test coordinators with the procedures and practices that promote a secure testing program. The information in this supplement includes issues test coordinators may encounter before, during, and after a test administration and is meant to provide guidance. This document is not intended to replace any procedures or instructions contained in the District Test Coordinator's Manual or Test Administration Directions. It is provided to testing personnel in hopes of encouraging successful and incident-free test administrations.

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Design a Secure System

District and associate (building) test coordinators are responsible for designing and implementing a secure testing system that adheres to regulations and acknowledges the local capacity of the district and sites. The following questions provide a guide for determining how best to implement each aspect of a secure testing system at your sites.

Determine Testing Sites

- ☐ Have you located all alternate test sites that you will need during the test window?
- ☐ Have you applied for approval for alternate test sites?

Storing Test Materials

All secure test materials must be kept in **locked** storage when not in use.

- ☐ Is your storage area large enough to store all secure materials you will receive from the test contractor?
- ☐ Has each test center/school site established its own secure area?
- ☐ Do you have enough room to sort all the materials you'll receive for each administration?
- ☐ Have you identified the authorized personnel who will have access to the locked storage?

Transporting Secure Materials

The ultimate responsibility of accounting for test materials falls upon the district test coordinator; however, associate (building) test coordinators play an integral role in supporting this task. Using some type of tracking document such as the Secure Materials Transfer Form (located in the District Test Coordinator's Manual) can greatly assist in your ability to locate all secure materials in your district throughout a test administration.

- ☐ Have you established a secure method for transferring materials to school sites and test centers?
- ☐ Are the individuals transporting the materials authorized to handle secure materials? School district personnel who only transport or help manage materials sign a Level 5 TSA.
- ☐ Have you established control lists that include signatures to identify who is responsible for materials when they are not in your possession?

Tracking Overage

Each district receives additional test materials, known as overage. Any additional materials that the district transfers to a test center or school site must be tracked to that location. This also applies to secure materials that are transferred back and forth from test centers or school sites within a district.

- ☐ Do you have procedures for distributing overage materials?
- ☐ Do you have a procedure that documents security numbers for booklets and tracks the whereabouts of test materials?
- ☐ Do the test centers and school sites have a procedure that documents transferred booklets?
- ☐ Do you have a process for ensuring that overage is accounted for after the administration?

Prevent Test Security Irregularities and Violations through Training

DTC Training Responsibilities

Preparing for and conducting training sessions is the best way to avoid problems in statewide test administrations. Provide as many sessions as needed in order to ensure that all test administrators and proctors in your district are trained.

- ☐ Have you signed the Level 1 Test Security Agreement and submitted it to EED?
- ☐ Have you attended district test coordinator training?
- ☐ Have you thoroughly reviewed the current District Test Coordinator's Manual?
- ☐ **Have you reviewed the DTC Milestone Schedule early enough to allow time to adequately train the necessary personnel in your district?**
- ☐ Determine if you or your associate (building) test coordinators will train test administrators; have you put together training materials or guidelines that associate (building) test coordinators can use for any training they may be providing?
- ☐ Have you given district personnel ample notice of training dates?
- ☐ Have you made facility arrangements to hold training sessions?
- ☐ Have you developed training materials for the sessions?
- ☐ Have you provided a contact number for sites to reach you with questions?

Training Topics for Associate Test Coordinators (ATCs)

Important topics to include in training associate (building) test coordinators are shown here:

Associate Test Coordinators' Procedures

Associate (building) test coordinators play a vital role in the handling of secure materials. It's important that they have appropriate procedures in place for tracking secure materials.

- ☐ Does each test center and/or school site have check-out/check-in procedures for secure materials established and documented?
- ☐ Do test administrators at all test centers and/or school sites check out and check in secure materials?
- ☐ Do associate (building) test coordinators know that they should verify and account for all booklets each day?
- ☐ Do associate (building) test coordinators have procedures for properly packing and returning test materials to the district?

Before Test Administration

- ☐ Sign the test security agreement (Level 2: Lead Coordinators/District-wide; Level 3: Associate Test Coordinators/Sites)
- ☐ Review current test administration manuals
- ☐ Ensure knowledge of procedures for tracking secure materials
- ☐ Storage of secure test materials
- ☐ Immediate inventory of test materials when shipments arrive (i.e., count the materials)
- ☐ Verify that the test center or school site has ample test materials for the test administration
- ☐ Procedures for reconciling any shortages in test materials

- ☐ Procedures for reporting discrepancies in inventories
- ☐ Review application and use of all labels (e.g., precode, school/district, Do Not Score)
- ☐ Designation of test administrators and proctors
- ☐ Schedule of training sessions for test proctors and test administrators and verifying their attendance
- ☐ Arrange/schedule administration of documented accommodations for the site (small groups, flexible scheduling, read alouds, etc.)
- ☐ Review appropriate test administration procedures
- ☐ Review test irregularities and invalidation procedures
- ☐ Schedule for make-up testing (not applicable to Grade 10 SBA-HSGQE or HSGQE Retest)
- ☐ Arrangement of testing rooms and organizing test sessions
- ☐ Verifying visible aids have been removed and the environment is conducive for testing
- ☐ Responsibility to supervise the transcription of student responses when necessary

During Test Administration

- ☐ Use a Test Security Checklist to keep track of tests when distributing materials to test administrators
- ☐ Account for all test materials before and after testing EACH day
- ☐ Actively monitor the administration of the tests by visiting each testing area
- ☐ Be aware of any appearance of impropriety. Make sure proctors and test administrators know how to avoid situations that might lead to questions or accusations of viewing, reading, or discussing test items (including student responses)
- ☐ Ensure that students are being administered the appropriate tests and have the corresponding answer documents
- ☐ Ensure that LEP students or students with disabilities are receiving documented accommodations. All former LEP students do not receive accommodations
- ☐ Contact EED immediately to report any test security violations

After Test Administration

- ☐ Facilitate the collection of materials from the test administrators
- ☐ Account for every test book and for every answer booklet for every student (this includes any overage or transferred materials)
- ☐ Verify that the correct Teacher's Use Only code is marked where applicable
- ☐ Verify that all bubbled information and transcribing has been done appropriately
- ☐ Properly dispose or securely store scratch paper and test administration manuals
- ☐ Double check the secure storage area for materials (especially overage or unused materials)
- ☐ Follow procedures for properly boxing and labeling materials for return to the DTC

Training Topics for Test Administrators and Proctors

Important topics to include in training test administrators and proctors are shown here:

Before Test Administration

- ☐ Sign the test security agreement (Level 4: Test administrators and proctors/Classrooms)
- ☐ Review current test administration manuals
- ☐ Ensure knowledge of procedures for tracking secure materials from classroom to school storage area
- ☐ Storage of secure test materials
- ☐ Inventory of test materials when they arrive in classroom and when they are turned in
- ☐ Procedures for reporting discrepancies in inventories
- ☐ Appropriate administration of documented accommodations for students
- ☐ Review appropriate test administration procedures
- ☐ Review test irregularities and invalidation procedures
- ☐ Arrangement of testing rooms and organizing test sessions
- ☐ Verifying visible aids have been removed and the environment is conducive for testing
- ☐ Responsibility to supervise the transcription of student responses when necessary

During Test Administration

- ☐ Appropriate and inappropriate responses to students' requests for assistance
- ☐ Appropriate and inappropriate procedures for checking students' bubbling as they work
- ☐ Account for all test materials before and after testing EACH day
- ☐ Actively monitor the students; proper procedures for doing so
- ☐ Be aware of any appearance of impropriety. Make sure proctors and test administrators know how to avoid situations that might lead to questions or accusations of viewing, reading, or discussing test items (including student responses)
- ☐ Ensure that students are being administered the appropriate tests and have the corresponding answer documents
- ☐ Ensure that teachers are aware of electronic devices procedures
- ☐ Ensure that students who are not eligible for accommodations do not receive them; ensure that teachers know what not allowed (highlighters, headphones, etc.)
- ☐ Ensure that LEP students or students with disabilities are receiving documented accommodations. All former LEP students do not receive accommodations
- ☐ Ensure students are properly monitored and supervised during breaks, bathroom breaks, and lunch.
- ☐ Appropriate and inappropriate procedures for receiving completed test books and asking students to check their work
- ☐ Contact ATC immediately to report any test security violations

After Test Administration

- ☐ Secure transportation of test materials to ATC; books may not be transported by a student or left unattended
- ☐ Account for every test book and for every answer booklet for every student
- ☐ Properly dispose or securely store scratch paper and test administration manuals

Keep Materials Secure At All Times; Communicate Procedures to All Staff

District test coordinators are responsible for all secure materials in the district. Proper and thorough training of all personnel in the receipt, handling, tracking, and return of test materials is likely to be the best defense against the loss or late return of these items. Below are some tips that can help district test coordinators account for all materials:

Secure materials: Receipt of testing materials

- ☐ Have you prepared an area to store secure and non-secure materials?
- ☐ Have you identified all personnel who will be authorized to have access to materials?
- ☐ Have you verified the number of boxes in the shipment? (For all shipments, be sure to check that all boxes are accounted for)
- ☐ Have you verified the contents of the boxes?
- ☐ Do you have enough materials to cover the students who will be testing?
- ☐ Have you verified that the overage material will cover the shortages?
- ☐ Have you verified the tracking of overages and transferred test booklets by documenting the security numbers and the destination of the materials?
- ☐ Have you distributed overage using the district's procedures for distributing secure material?
- ☐ Have you sent the appropriate materials to schools and test centers? DO NOT DELAY in sending them.
- ☐ Have you verified that all schools and test centers have inventoried their shipments from you?

Secure materials: During Administration

Verify All Sites Are Following Procedures for Handling Secure Materials

- ☐ Have you checked that schools and test centers are using a security checklist to ensure proper tracking of materials?
- ☐ Have you checked to make sure schools and test centers are documenting security numbers for overage materials and transferred booklets?
- ☐ Are schools and test centers immediately reporting discrepancies in inventories?
- ☐ Have you checked to see if associate (building) test coordinators are verifying that all booklets are being returned and are accounted for EACH day?

Be Available to Solve Problems

- ☐ Do schools and test centers have a reliable way of communicating with you or other district testing staff?
- ☐ Have you given associate test (building) coordinators instructions on how to contact you?
- ☐ Have you arranged for continual coverage for answering questions throughout the test window?

Secure materials: After Administration

Accounting for Secure Materials

District test coordinators are ultimately responsible for the accounting of and return of all of the district's secure materials. These materials must be returned in accordance with the procedures and timelines outlined in the *District Test Coordinator's Manual*. Reinforcing the use of proper procedures and guidelines to all personnel in the handling, tracking, and return of test materials is likely to be the best defense against the loss or late return of these items. Below are some tips that can help district test coordinators fulfill this responsibility.

Monitor schools and test centers and oversee the proper accounting for secure materials.

- ☐ Are you verifying that schools and test centers are counting all test books and answer booklets?
- ☐ Are schools and test centers reconciling all secure materials to the original packing list?
- ☐ Have the schools and test centers double checked their secure storage areas for overage and unused secure materials?
- ☐ Have schools and test centers verified that all personnel have signed security agreements?
- ☐ Are the schools and test centers using the correct shipping/packing procedures?
- ☐ Have you verified the shipment from each of the schools and test centers?
- ☐ Have you verified each sequence of numbers from the security checklists submitted by schools?

Final packaging for return of all test materials and scorable documents

- ☐ Have you heard from Assessment Distribution Services (ADS) to arrange for pick up? (HSGQE and SBA assessments only)
- ☐ Do you have an airbill if you are a drop off district?
- ☐ Do you have a bill of lading if you are a pick up district?

Reporting Breach of Test Security, Testing Irregularity or Violation

When incidents occur, it's important to have procedures in place to help ensure that all the necessary information is gathered to support a determination of what occurred.

All incidents should be reported immediately so the potential loss of accurate information is avoided.

Here are a few guidelines to follow to help assess and report an incident:

What Happened?

- ☐ Have you determined that a test irregularity occurred?
- ☐ Have you interviewed all individuals who were involved in or may have information about the irregularity (including students)?
- ☐ Have you determined exactly what happened and why?
- ☐ Did you prepare a timeline, if necessary, to establish when events occurred?

Have you appropriately documented the incident?

- ☐ Have you gathered statements from all individuals who were involved in or may have information about the irregularity?
- ☐ Do the statements include the name and role (title) of the individual?
- ☐ Do the statements include how the individual was involved in the incident?
- ☐ Do the statements include a description of the incident from the individual's perspective?
- ☐ Do the statements include the individual's signature?
- ☐ Do the statements include the date the statement was generated?
- ☐ Are all written statements dated and signed?

Has a corrective action plan been requested?

Corrective action plans are not required for the initial submission of documentation, but they may be requested based on EED's review of the incident. When a corrective action plan is required, here are some questions to address in a response:

- ☐ Does the plan include a brief summary of the violation?
- ☐ Does the plan include a description of how the incident occurred?
- ☐ Does the plan include a description of why the incident occurred?
- ☐ Does the plan include a description of the specific procedure(s) that will be implemented to help prevent future occurrences of this type of violation?
- ☐ Does the plan include the name and role (title) of the person(s) responsible?
- ☐ Has the superintendent signed off on the corrective action plan?

Have you completed the reporting process?

- ☐ Did you contact EED to report the incident?
- ☐ Have you ensured that the statements and reports clearly lay out the sequence of events and explain exactly what happened?
- ☐ Have you submitted a final, written narrative about what happened and who is responsible?
- ☐ Supporting documentation that requires a signature can be faxed to (907) 465-8400. All incidents should be reported immediately so the potential loss of accurate information is avoided.

Appendix A

Common Testing Irregularities, Violations, and Breach of Test Security

1. Illness during testing (**reported locally only**)
2. Unscheduled evacuation/drill etc.
3. Not covering or removing classroom displays that provide information regarding the content being measured by the test or test-taking strategies (when safely possible)
4. Failing to follow appropriate procedures for providing testing accommodations
5. Failure to follow procedures in TAD
6. Failure to distribute manipulatives (where applicable)
7. Administering test without receiving training
8. Giving students instruction related to the concepts measured by the tests during the test administration session
9. Paraphrasing, omitting, revising, or rewriting the script or the directions contained in the TAD
10. Failure to provide breaks
11. Failure to use #2 pencil
12. Picking up test before student has finished it
13. Failure to administer test during testing window
14. Failure to follow test schedule
15. Failure to assess all eligible students
16. Failing to provide accommodations to appropriate students
17. Providing accommodations to students who are not eligible to receive them
18. Changing student reports, records
19. Leaving students unsupervised with access to secure test materials
20. Allowing unsupervised (unmonitored on HSGQE) breaks
21. Revealing confidential student information to unauthorized persons
22. Failure to provide training for test administrators and/or proctors
23. Failing to sign/collect test security agreement(s)
24. Allowing students to look at, review, or complete content area subtests on a day other than the designated test day
25. Administering the wrong grade level test
26. Failing to return the originally distributed number of test materials (e.g., test books, answer booklets) to designated school personnel
27. Losing test(s)
28. Coaching students during the administration (e.g., providing sample phrases for constructed response items, helping students find answers in passages, telling student an answer is wrong, pointing to an answer for any purpose, etc.)
29. Allowing access to tests to those who are not authorized to do so
30. Allowing non-school employees or employees who have not signed a TSA into a testing room
31. Viewing, discussing, or revealing test content or student responses
32. Allowing students to review secure test materials prior to the test administration
33. Any student use of cell phone (e.g., receives or sends text or voice messages, takes pictures, etc.)
34. Unauthorized use of any electronic device (some devices may be used for documented student accommodations)
35. Cheating
36. Reading or tampering with (e.g. alter, change, modify, erase) student responses to the test questions
37. Interpreting, explaining test items, or answer choices (except on accommodated tests)
38. Copying secure materials